

By Shehribano Taseer

http://www.newsweekpakistan.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=177&Itemid=53

Human rights organizations are demanding Noreen's release, and protection. Even Pope Benedict XVI has weighed in and regretted Pakistan's "violence and discrimination" against its Christian citizens. In May, the European Parliament adopted a resolution "welcoming the measures taken in the interest of religious minorities by the Government of Pakistan since November 2008," but expressed "deep concern that the blasphemy laws ... are often used to justify censorship, criminalization, persecution, and, in certain cases, the murder of ... minorities." The **U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom** has hailed the government's 2009 decision to observe every Aug. 11 as "national minorities' day," but is concerned about the blasphemy laws.